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ON PAGE 13

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Washington Roundup

COCOM Plans

U.S. will attempt to strengthen international controls on shipment of militarily critical technologies to Soviet bloc nations this October during a meeting of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) in Paris. Under Secretary of State James L. Buckley said the U.S. now knows it was a mistake to think during the 1970s that shipment of high technology to the Soviet Union would somehow alter its international behavior. He told the Senate the U.S. will propose expanding the COCOM control list to include gas turbine engines, metallurgical processes, electronic grade silicon, space launch vehicles and spacecraft, robotics, printed circuit board technology, ceramic materials for engines and computer hardware and software technology.

Neither proponents nor opponents of defense spending were satisfied with a secret briefing given the Senate last week on the Soviet military buildup. Opponents of increased U.S. defense spending called it a "scare briefing," and proponents complained the Defense Intelligence Agency showered the senators with numbers which, by themselves, failed to communicate the size of the threat. The senators heard that the Soviets have gone from 173 divisions to 185 divisions in the last year, reached their 1990 target number of tanks on hand in 1981 and have nine types of submarines under development simultaneously. Members of Congress are urging the Defense Dept. to release photos of the Soviet Ram-P bomber (AW&ST Dec. 14, 1981, p. 17).